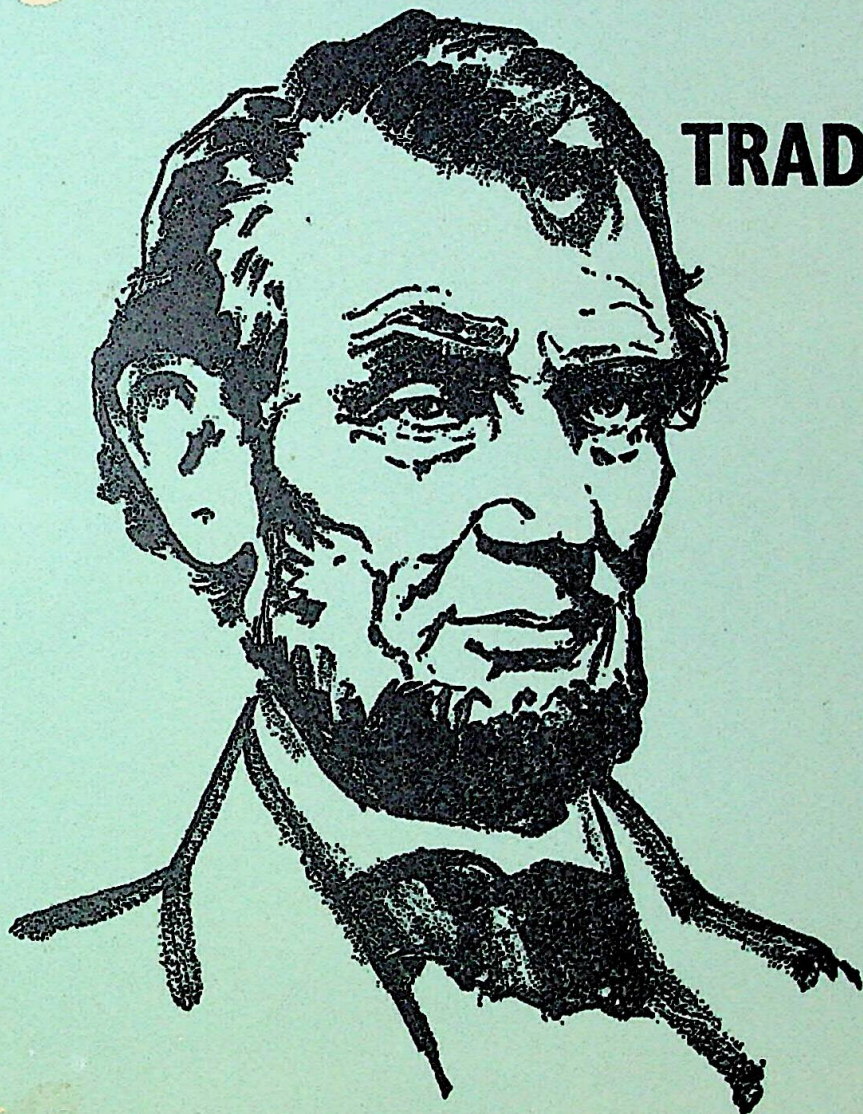
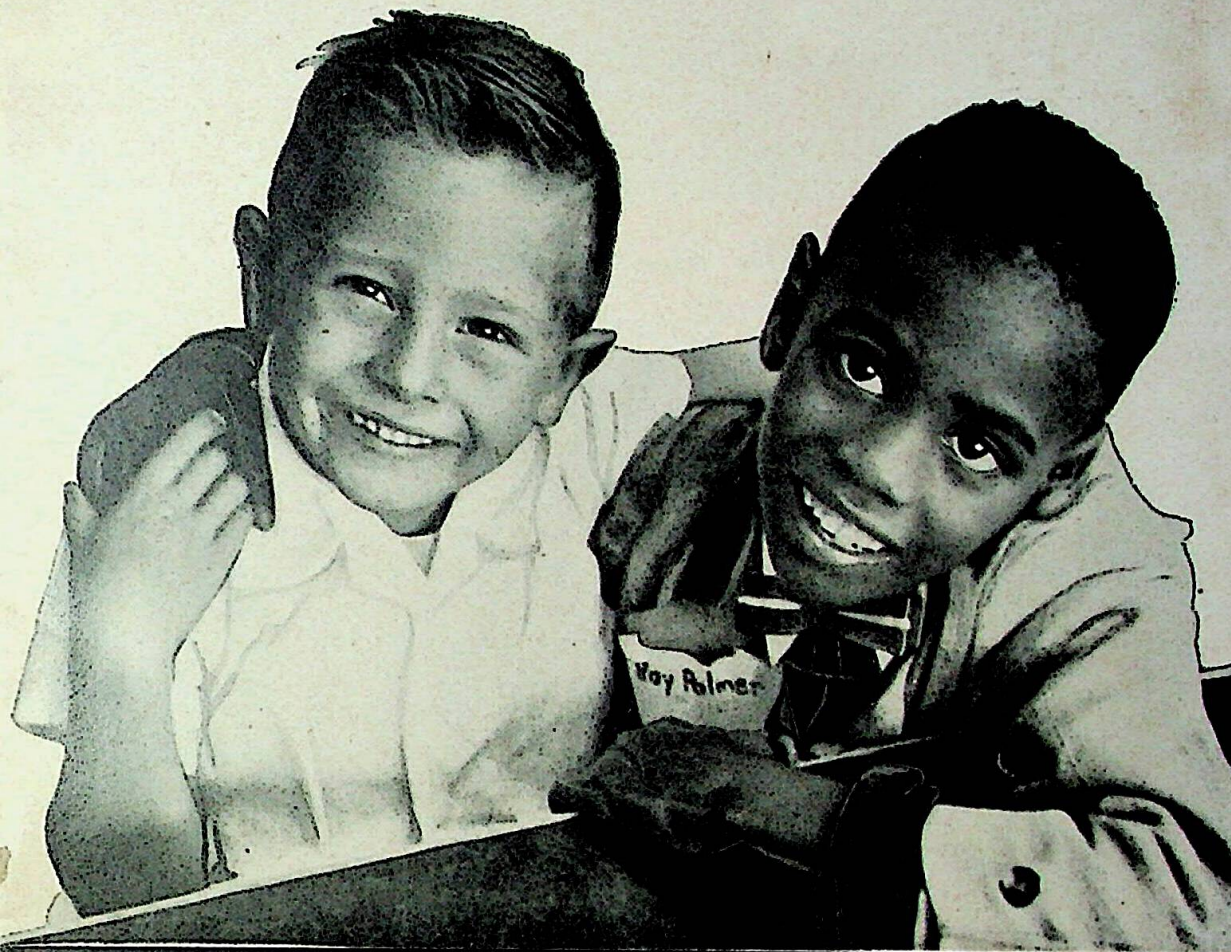


IN THE

Lincoln

TRADITION





THE STORY of INTEGRATION

In the Lincoln Tradition

"NO NATION can endure half free and half-slave" said Abraham Lincoln.

While Lincoln was referring to physical bondage, it is equally true that no nation can rise to its full stature if it allows conditions to exist which shackle the mind or the human spirit.

In America, the government and the people have learned that segregation is not compatible with a truly democratic society. They have taken,—in the Lincoln tradition—firm, radical steps to obliterate it.

The Story of Integration is the story of a people rising to its full nationhood. It is particularly appropriate at this time as the American people commemorate the 149th anniversary of Lincoln's birthday—February 12, 1958.

The Story of Integration

OF ALL the revolutionary currents that have swept through American education from the beginning, none has presented more thorny problems than the process now under way of integrating the segregated schools. And, in the long view, none has held richer promise for the future—the future Abraham Lincoln envisioned for his country and people.

In most of the Nation, students of all races and national backgrounds have been attending un-segregated schools for many years. But until recently seventeen of the forty-eight States, all of them in the South, and the district incorporating the capital city of Washington, have had laws on their statute books providing for separate educational facilities for white and Negro students.

The transformation in progress in most of these Southern States today stems from the now historic 1954 decision of the United States Supreme Court, outlawing racial segregation and declaring it a denial of equal access to public opportunity. This reversed the Court's 1896 decision which ruled that provision of "separate but equal" facilities did not violate the

United States Constitution, the fundamental law of the land.

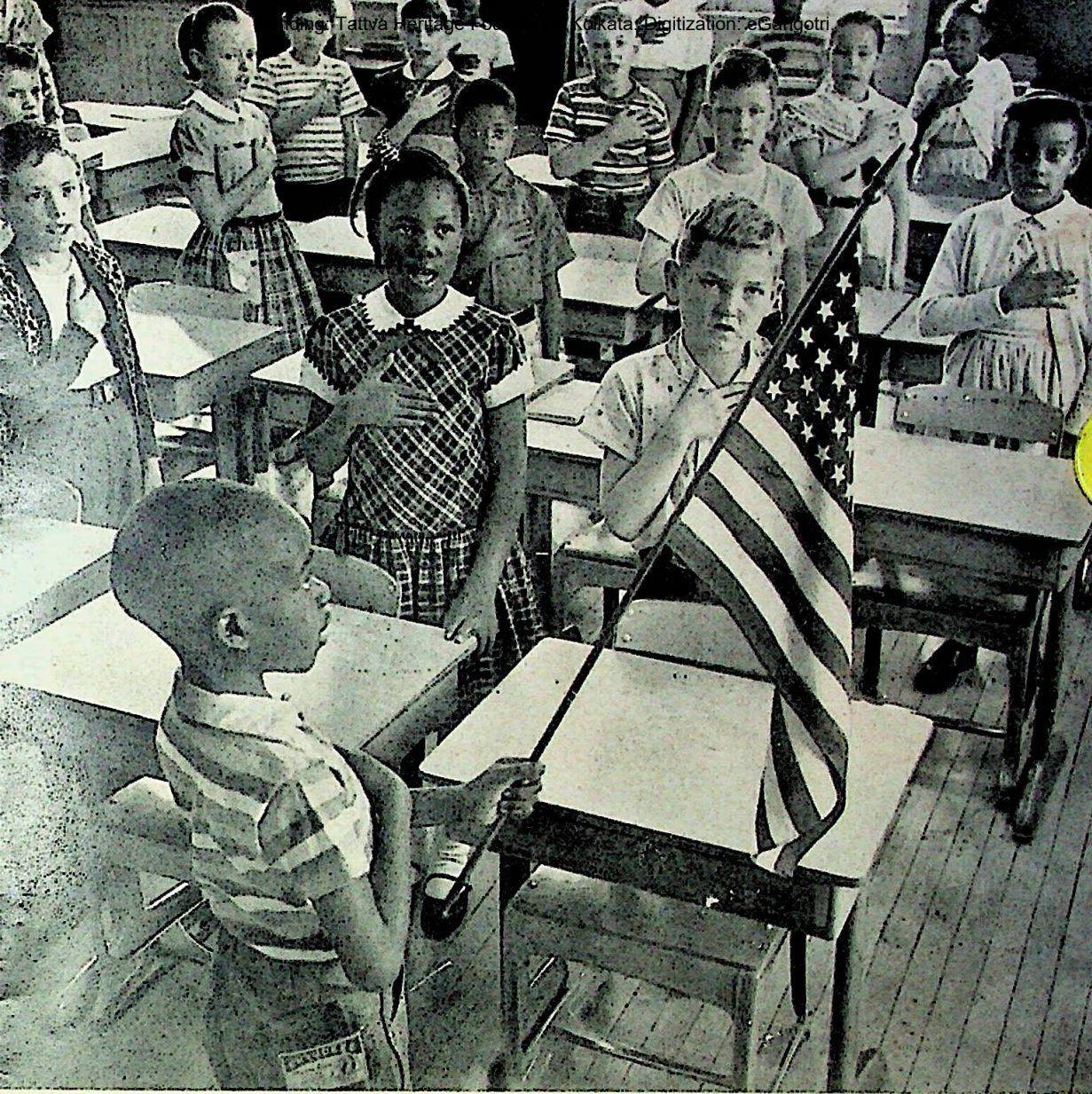
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From time to time during the past two years, the world's newspapers have erupted with black headlines and pictures of racial clashes in one or another of America's Southern States. These isolated outbursts, whipped up by extremists as the South adjusts to the Supreme Court ruling, have sometimes tended to overshadow the successful integration being accomplished elsewhere.

There is a greater story which seldom makes headlines. It is a story reflected in figures such as these: ...In the 17 Southern States where segregation was practised until 1954, some 723 school districts had taken steps by September 1956 to comply with the Supreme Court ruling. More than 450,000 Negro students attended integrated grade schools in these States during the school year ending in 1957. A total of 125 colleges and universities in the Southern United States, formerly restricted to white students, were admitting Negroes early in 1956. The entire school system of the District of Columbia was completely integrated during the 1954-1955 academic year....

Times have changed. Most Americans firmly believe that integration of all the schools will come, perhaps slowly in some areas, but surely and inevitably. No man of good will in the South today feels that the Negro should be denied any of his rights as an American citizen. Yet the best way to achieve true educational equality, in some communities, is still far from clear. The Supreme Court edict wisely offered no point-by-point blue-print for integration, but it permitted an

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A class of elementary school children in the United States begins the day with a salute and the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag. Children of all races and national backgrounds have been attending un-segregated schools in America for many years, except in the South, where until recently, some 17 States had laws providing for separate educational facilities for white and Negro students.

indefinite period of adjustment, realizing that each community must follow the course best suited to its particular circumstances.

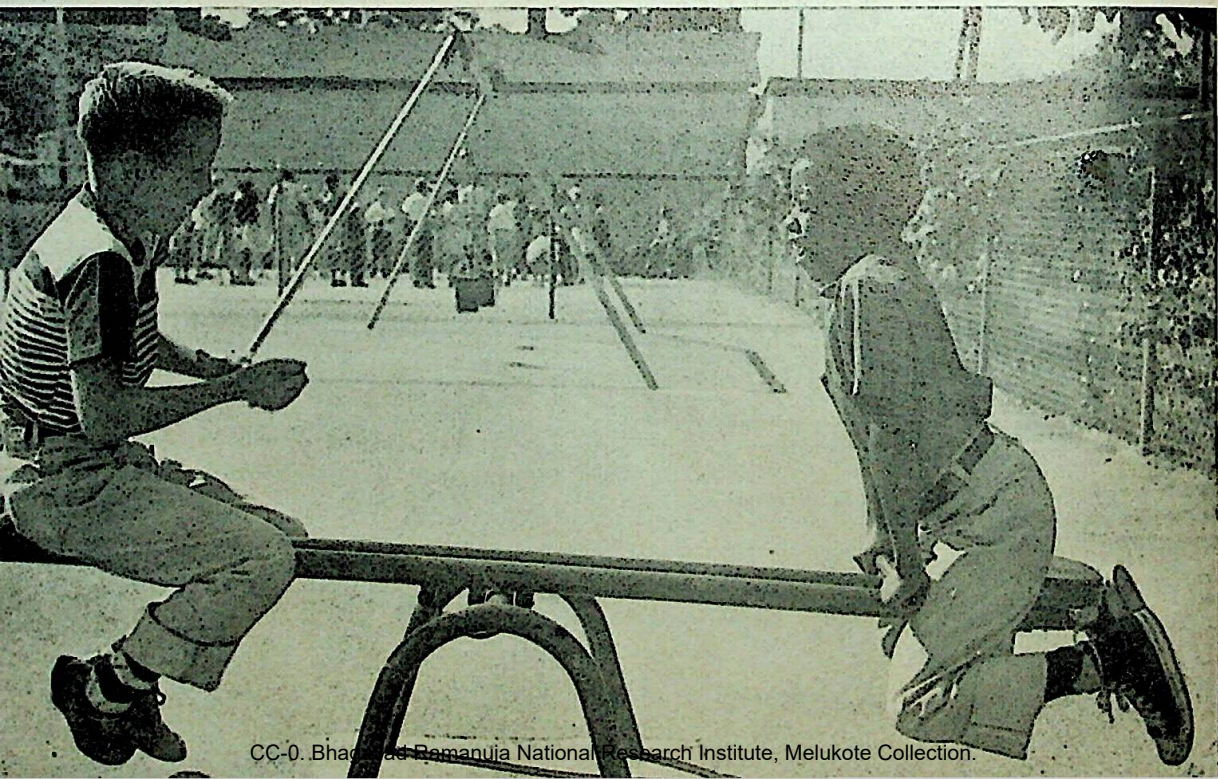
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In some places the answer seemed to be immediate integration of the schools. In others, it seemed wiser to accomplish integration gradually. Still others are slow to begin. But few doubt that the South will inevitably turn the full steam of its energy, intelligence and good will to repairing the damage inflicted by a policy that is now officially labelled as socially and morally wrong.

Meanwhile, how is integration working in the communities in which it is being practised?

In Baltimore, Maryland, where integration was

White and Negro children play freely in the playgrounds of an elementary school in Louisville, Kentucky. Desegregation in this Southern city began peacefully in September 1956, under a plan of voluntary and gradual integration.



put into effect promptly, in all public schools at one full stride, it has been accepted by the public in almost routine fashion. Yet Baltimore is America's largest Southern city, with close to a million people, 25 per cent of them Negroes. Until the Supreme Court handed down its decision Baltimore had held to its tradition of racial segregation as firmly as any city in the South.

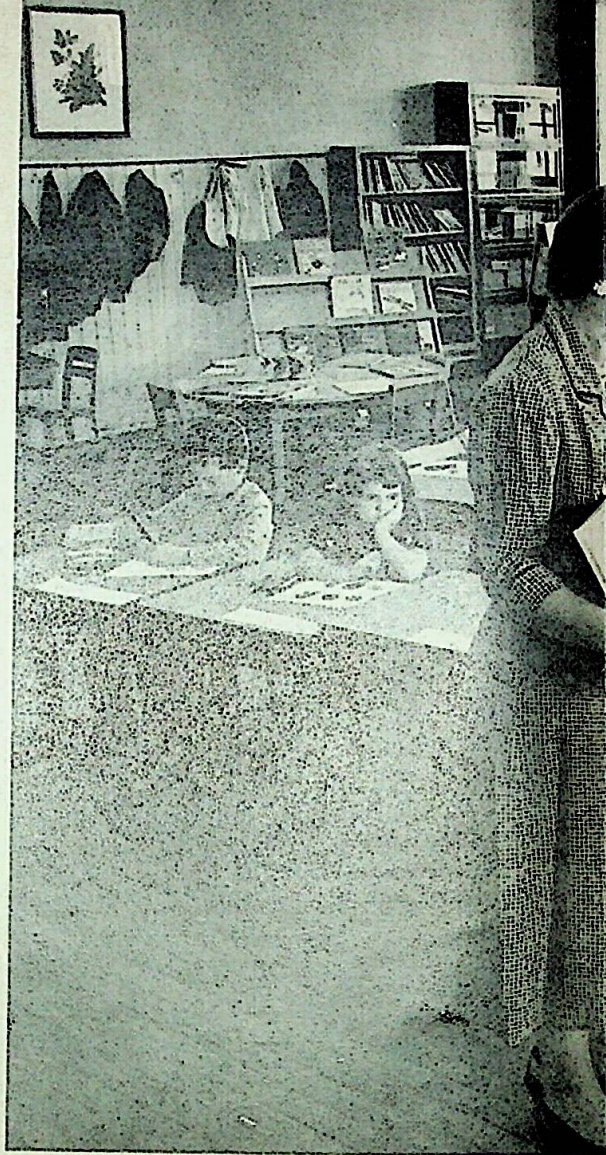
On June 14, less than a month after the Court's action, Dr. John H. Fischer, Baltimore's Superintendent of Public Instruction, called together the city's 5,000 teachers, white and Negro, and explained the new policy. He equated the Court's decision with past resolutions which "one by one have destroyed the barriers that stood between the ordinary man and a richer life." He pointed out that at every stage of advancing democracy there have been "viewers-with-alarm," and each time a strengthened people proved them wrong.

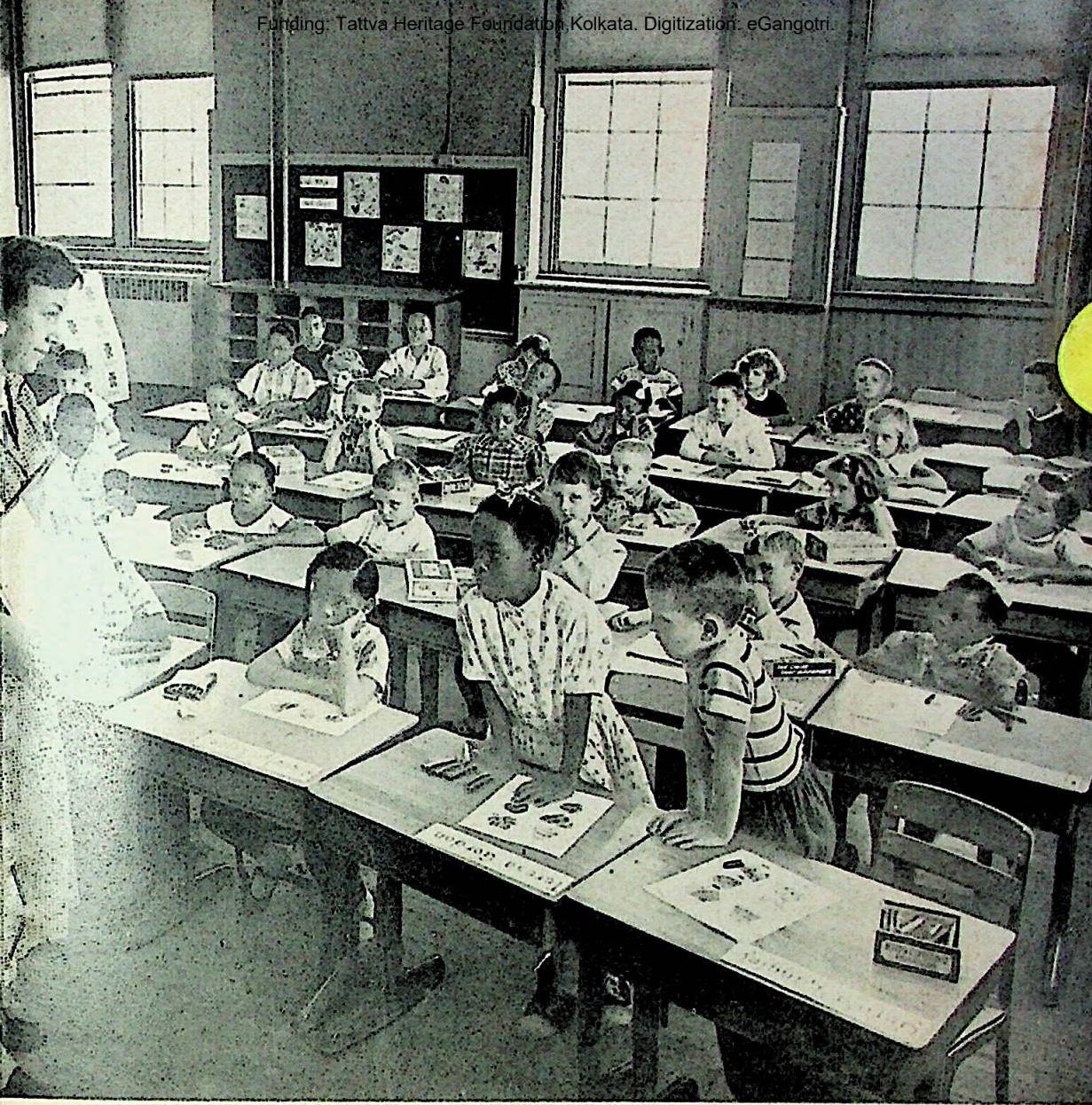
Except for Dr. Fischer's talk, Baltimore's teachers were given no special preparation for handling mixed classes, and no special effort was made to get the school children psychologically ready for integration. But parents and children were given considerable freedom of choice in selection of schools to attend.

When the city's schools opened in the fall, reporters and photographers were out in force, getting the names and pictures of Negro pupils attending schools once closed to them. There proved to be no great shifts in school population. Many schools remained all-white or all-Negro because they were located in all-white or all-Negro neighbourhoods. Where mixing did occur,

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Louisville, Kentucky, a city of 400,000 population, has always been deeply Southern in character. One fourth of its school children are Negroes. Kentucky was once a slave State. It had segregated schools prior to the Supreme Court ruling of May 1954. Yet there have been few headlines from Kentucky. Several years of preparatory measures involving Parent-Teachers Associations, the press, churches, and school officials made the transition period in Louisville relatively easy. As a result 9 city schools have remained all-Negro, 11 have remained all-white and 55 are now mixed.





there were no "incidents". Opening day was calm and orderly. The children themselves, especially in the kindergartens and the early grades, where the largest amount of mixing took place, were wholly unconcerned about it.

Somewhat later, small groups began to foment dissatisfaction, but the School Board stood firmly by its principles. Public opinion was crystallized, with the people rallying to the support of the integrated schools. And in the schools themselves, most of the students went about their business as if nothing unusual were happening.

In Washington, D.C., essentially a Southern city in custom and tradition, the schools were integrated in the fall of 1954, as in Baltimore. The success of the program in both cities shows how well immediate integration can work when backed by community cooperation. Some thousand Negro teachers were integrated in Washington schools.

Most of the Baltimore and Washington educators feel that the sudden plunge into integration was the best way for their cities; half-measures might only have led to complications. But local conditions in America are highly varied, and other ways might well prove more effective in other places. In Louisville, for example, the largest city in the State of Kentucky, the groundwork for integration was laid by two full years of hard work and careful planning on the part of a number of community agencies working together.

Louisville is now a striking example of integration in full operation. It is a bustling industrial and commercial city on the Ohio River and has always

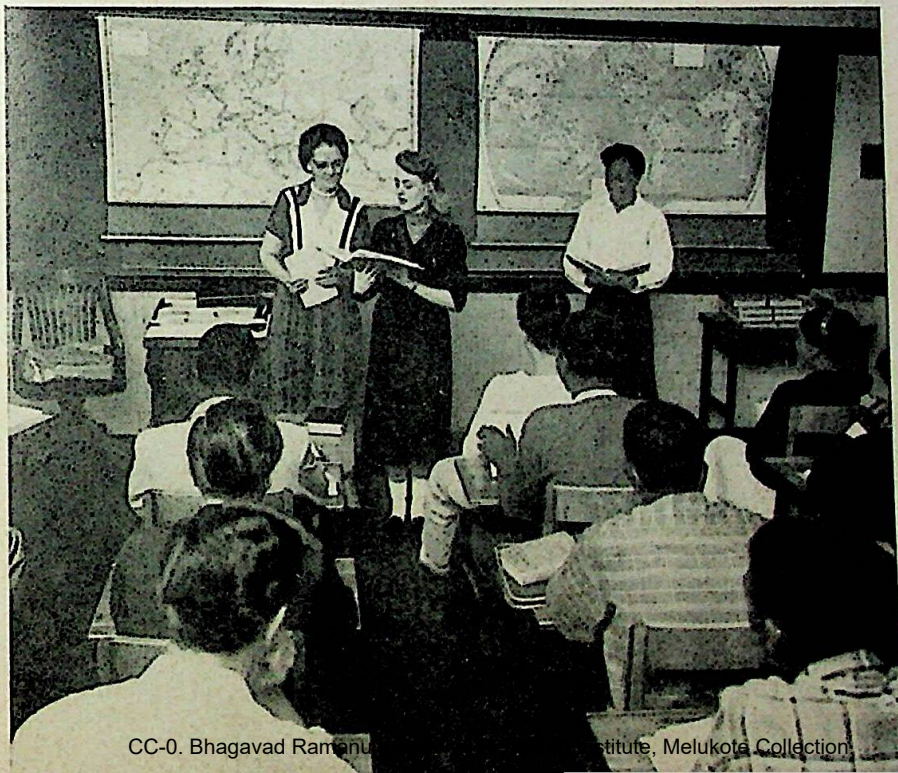
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been deeply Southern in character. With a population of some 400,000 people, Negroes make up 25 per cent of the public-school enrollment.

When the schoolbells called Louisville's white and Negro pupils to integrated classrooms in September 1956, the new order was launched with hardly a ripple. The task had been eased by the fact that for the past 10 years, many antiquated racial bastions such as the desegregation of parks, libraries, swimming pools, etc., had already been breached. The University of Louisville some years before the Supreme Court edict had already been opened to Negro students. And during the two years of preparation for the changeover, Parent-Teacher Associations, women's clubs, civic groups, youth groups, and teachers, clergymen, and

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In Washington D.C., integration was put into effect promptly in one full stride in the fall of 1954. Negroes form 64 per cent of the public school attendance in this essentially Southern city.



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other community leaders had joined forces to create a "favourable climate" for it. Through meetings, panel discussions, study sessions, sermons, lectures, newspaper editorials, and radio and television programmes, the people of Louisville were made fully acquainted with all the implications of the Supreme Court ruling, were asked to offer suggestions as to the best way of implementing it, and were made sharers in the planning. With integration now successfully launched, the children of Louisville will grow up largely unaware of the racial tensions of the Louisville their parents knew.

Another city, St. Louis, in the State of Missouri, a large manufacturing and distributing centre with a population of more than 900,000 has achieved similar success in integrating its public schools. In some instances, this involved placing Negro teachers over white pupils and Negro administrators over white subordinates. A Negro was made supervisor of instruction for the whole city system. These were radical changes for a city reared to segregation for generations, yet no serious difficulties marred the record. Here, too, credit must be given to community preparation and to the constant cooperation of civic and religious groups. Also, the procedure to be followed was fully publicized in advance, step by step as the schools were combined—first the teachers colleges, then the high schools, then the elementary schools.

Other parts of the South, however, sometimes mirror a different picture. Particularly in small towns and in rural areas, the long-familiar pattern of segregation is hotly defended. Many Southerners still feel

that more effort must be made to bring true equality of educational and economic opportunity to the Negro, but that this can and should be done within the traditional framework of segregation.

Because of such deep-rooted attitudes, the Supreme Court action struck the South with staggering force—even though judicial actions and a maturing public opinion had been chipping away at segregation for decades. In some places, fear and hysteria led to scattered outbursts of violence. A case in point was the widely publicized resistance, on the part of the University of Alabama, to admit the woman Negro student Autherine Lucy, or the more recent Little Rock “incident”.

Far more representative is the orderly, undramatic observance of the law in other Southern towns and cities. On the college level particularly, integration is proceeding smoothly almost everywhere. A typical example is the University of North Carolina, one of the oldest and proudest educational institutions in the South. Negroes have been admitted here since 1951. Such acts of discrimination as were practised in the early years of integration by a timid school administration were vehemently countered by the white student leaders and resolved in the Negroes' favour. And the University of North Carolina is only one of more than a hundred state-supported Southern institutions of higher learning, rigidly segregated for years, that have opened their doors to thousands of Negroes to date. They are making a conscientious effort to adjust themselves to the new social order. Most of the students look upon integration as something that

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has become a fact of life and believe the thing to do about it is to find intelligent, constructive ways to make it work.

Experience is showing that one of the biggest problems integration poses is coping with the wide educational gap that exists between white and Negro pupils. This underscores the lower educational standards that prevailed in some of the formerly all-Negro schools. Many prominent educators believe the gap will disappear within from five to fifteen years of giving Negro and white youngsters the same basic education. Meanwhile, the schools in which integration is in effect are devising ways to bridge it. The pattern followed in Washington, St. Louis and other cities involves smaller classes with more individualized attention; remedial instruction for pupils who need it; and grouping children of like ability together within a class or school.

To sum up—the integration picture varies from place to place. Progress has been gradual and effective in some of the “border” States. Farther south, desegregation and integration have been proceeding more slowly, and some States appear to be delaying action. To date, eight States in the Deep South remain wholly segregated on the primary and secondary levels, but in some of these, too, Negroes are admitted to the State-supported colleges.

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In December 1956, two public-opinion experts, Herbert H. Hyman, Professor of Sociology at Columbia University, and Paul B. Sheatsley, Eastern Director of the National Opinion Research Centre of the University of Chicago, reported, on the basis of scienti-

fic surveys conducted for fourteen years, that acceptance of integration is nationwide, and is supported, in the South, by revolutionary changes in ancient beliefs about Negroes and by the continuing influx of better educated and more tolerant young people into the effective adult population.

Little by little, as this vast project in social engineering makes headway, old barriers are crumbling with the marshalling of significant thought, both in the localities concerned and throughout the nation. But there can be no quick remedy for so complex a human problem. Progress may be delayed by resistance

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Over 125 colleges and universities in the Southern United States, formerly restricted to white students, are now admitting Negroes. Here, students pause for a moment's relaxation on the library steps of West Virginia State College, which opened its doors to integration in September 1954.



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born of fear, custom, self-interest, misunderstanding, organized force, even honest conviction. Nevertheless history has shown that great moral issues carry their own built-in solutions, and most Americans feel today that the best way to help the inexorable forces along is to hammer away at the problem until it ceases to be one.

Meanwhile, the South is echoing with the anxious talk of divided men and women, worried that their accustomed world may be tumbling about their ears. Yet even as matters now stand, the battle for a principle has been fought and won.

Integration will come. It will come through the courage, sacrifice and determination of an ever-rising number of people, both white and Negro, who are of determined to give every American his birthright. The full saga of integration will be a story of which Americans will be justly proud. It will be a story in the Lincoln tradition.





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